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COMMANDER PEARY'S ARCTIC EXPEDITION.

The first news of the safe return of Commander Peary and his expedition from the Arctic Ocean north of Greenland was received in a message he sent from Hopedale, Labrador, *via* Twillingate, Newfoundland, Nov. 2. His ship, the *Roosevelt*, had lost two propeller blades, and was otherwise injured. On Nov. 23 the *Roosevelt* arrived at Sydney, C. B., having taken the inside passage through the Strait of Belle Isle and across the Gulf of St. Lawrence. She had stopped at several ports for coal.

The New York *Herald*, on Nov. 21, published a very long cable despatch sent by the explorer from Chateau Bay, Labrador, describing in outline his work in the Arctic and his attainment of latitude of $87^{\circ} 6'$ north, within about 200 statute miles of the pole, which surpasses by thirty-eight statute miles the record of the "highest north" made in 1900 by Captain Cagni of the Duke of the Abruzzi Expedition to the north of Franz Josef Land. Commander Peary's sledge journey to within 200 miles of the pole is the most remarkable on record; and this, with his other experiences and achievements, will give his results a distinctive chapter in the history of Polar Exploration.

Leaving Etah after midnight on Aug. 16, 1905, the *Roosevelt* steamed in open water to Cape Fraser, beyond which she was driven back by ice, but finally reached an open channel close along the Greenland coast, in which she ran to Thank God Harbor. After very severe tussles with the ice the vessel was forced across the mouth of Robeson Channel to Cape Sheridan, which became her winter quarters, about four miles northwest of those of the *Alert* in 1875-76. This position was attained in twenty days from Cape Sabine.

By Oct. 1, one hundred musk oxen and deer had been secured. During that month a considerable number of the dogs died, and it was found they were being killed by cured whale meat that had become poisonous. Peary thus faced the problem of wintering his Eskimos and dogs on the resources of the country. He sent all his dogs and most of the natives in charge of Marvin and Henson south about seventy miles in Grant Land, where they lived in snow houses in the Lake Hazen Basin and along the slope of the United States Range, subsisting upon musk oxen, reindeer, hare and salmon trout.

The winter was remarkable for comparatively high temperatures. There were some furious gales from the south, and at such times water leads were invariably formed along the coast, some of them two or three miles in width. The ice was in motion nearly all the time. The three weeks after Christmas were a period of great anxiety, with the ice-pack surging back and forth and threatening to force the *Roosevelt* up on the ice-foot.

On Feb. 7 all the Eskimos and dogs were brought back to the ship. Of the 220 dogs, 120 remained. A few days later Capt. Bartlett and a party went to Cape Hecla and found leads of water extending north as far as they could see. There were leads along the Greenland and Grant Land coasts, and the northern part of Robeson Channel was open.

The entire party for the sledge journey to the north was assembled at Cape Hecla, consisting of Messrs. Peary, Bartlett, Wolff, Marvin, Henson, Clarke, Ryan, and 21 Eskimos, with 120 dogs. They were to be divided into one main and five or six division parties, which, the explorer hoped, would be able to advance supplies and maintain communication with a base selected for his final point of departure for the pole. Point Moss, 20 miles west of Cape Hecla, was selected as the point of leaving the land. On Feb. 28, Henson led the pioneer party of three light sledges and was followed on the succeeding days by the other parties. Movements of the ice, leads which had to be circumvented, and rough ice where the path had to be cut by pickaxes, made progress slow.

The first glimpse of the sun was on March 6. About 80 miles from the lands ledging greatly improved, but the leads were more frequent and wider. At $84^{\circ} 38' N.$ Peary came up with the advance parties of Bartlett, Henson, and Clarke, who were stalled by a broad lead extending east and west as far as could be seen. There was no immediate prospect of crossing, and so Bartlett and Clarke were sent back with their sledges to bring up more supplies, leaving the Peary and Henson parties to get across as soon as possible. At this time the Marvin, Wolff, and Ryan parties were bound outward from the land on their second trip. The lead slowly widened; but, after six days, when it was two miles wide, the Peary and Henson parties crossed it on the young ice that had formed. Henson pushed on, while Peary remained a day to establish a cache and leave instructions for the other supporting parties.

In three days Peary overtook Henson in $85^{\circ} 12' N.$, camped in a fog. There was a high wind, which increased to a furious gale, with snow, and they were in camp for six days while the storm

lasted. When it stopped, Peary's observations showed that he had been driven some 70 miles to the east.

Henson was started northward again, and two Eskimos with empty sledges were sent back to meet any supporting parties that might have crossed the lead before the storm and to bring up the cache at the lead. They returned in three days, saying that they had met open water, which they could not cross.

Peary could no longer count upon supporting parties, and decided that whatever was done must be done by a dash, with the outcome depending upon the weather and the condition of the ice:

We abandoned everything not absolutely necessary and bent every energy to setting a record pace. Such snow as the wind had not torn from the face of the floes was beaten and banked hard and the snow had been hammered into the areas of rough ice and the shattered edges of the big floes, so that they gave us little trouble. North of Storm Camp we had no occasion for snowshoes or pickaxes.

The first march of ten hours in the lead, with the compass, sometimes on a dog trot, the sledges following in Indian file, placed us thirty miles to the good. Four hours out on the second march I overtook Mr. Henson in his third camp, beside a lead which was closed. When I arrived he hitched up and followed behind my hurry party. I had with me now seven men and six teams, with less than half loads for each.

As we advanced the character of the ice improved, the floes becoming much larger and rafters infrequent, but the cracks and narrow leads increased and were nearly all active. These cracks were uniformly at right angles to our course, and the ice on the northern side was moving more rapidly eastward than that on the southern.

As dogs gave out, unable to keep the pace, they were fed to the others. On April 20 we came into a region of open leads leading nearly north and south, and the ice motion became more pronounced. Hurrying on between these a forced march was made. Then we slept a few hours, and, starting out again soon after midnight, pushed on till noon of the 21st. My observation then gave 87 deg. 6 min.

I thanked God with as good a grace as possible for what I had been able to accomplish, though it was but an empty bauble compared with the splendid jewel for which I was straining my life. But, looking at my remaining dogs and the nearly empty sledges, and bearing in mind the moving ice and the unknown quantity of the big lead between us and the nearest land, I felt that I had cut the margin as narrow as could be reasonably expected.

My flags were put out from the summit of the highest pinnacle near us, and a hundred feet or so beyond that I left a bottle containing a brief record and a piece of the flag which, six years before, I had carried around the northern end of Greenland.

The wind never ceased for an hour on the outward or the return journey. The southward journey was extremely difficult, and the situation of the party was sometimes critical. An ice bridge spanning a lead gave way under them, and they were set adrift on a floe which carried them steadily east for five days, while the lead was widening. The sledges were used as fuel to cook some of the dogs killed for food, as provisions had about given out. They at last succeeded in crossing the lead on the young ice, which bent under every step, and they saw when they reached the pack on the farther side that their fragile bridge had broken behind them.

On May 12 they dragged themselves into the ice-foot of the north coast of Greenland at Cape Neumayer, where, a little later, they found the supporting party headed by Clarke, which had also drifted to Greenland. The castaways were now foodless, but a herd of seven musk oxen was discovered; and Peary killed them

all, thus averting any danger of starvation. All the parties were eventually reassembled at the winter quarters. Not a man had been lost, and 41 of the 120 dogs survived the spring campaign.

A week after his return to the ship, Peary started west to complete the outlining of the unvisited coast-line in that part of Grant Land. He very briefly refers to this important feature of his work:

At Cape Columbia I killed six musk oxen and climbed the summit of the cape, leaving a record and a piece of the Arctic flag in a cairn. From there west to "Aldrich's furthest," then to the land at the northwest angle of Grinnell Land, on the summit of which, 2,000 feet high, I left another cairn and records. Then across a twenty-mile channel to another land, on the northern summit of which, 1,900 feet high, I left a third cairn and record. Twelve deer were secured on this land.

The return journey was a continuation of bad weather, fog, snow and wind. Our marches were greatly hampered by the innumerable lakes and rivers, formed by the melting snow.

Meanwhile, Mr. Marvin had carried a valuable line of soundings along the north coast of Grant Land as far west as Cape Fanshaw, and he and Capt. Bartlett had also completed lines of soundings across Robeson Channel, according to Commander Peary's instructions. The *Roosevelt* had a very severe experience on the southern journey through the Smith Sound channels, and had to be beached at the head of Etah Fiord to caulk the stern, tighten the propeller blades, and prepare the rudder. The Eskimos were landed at various points along the coast which they inhabit. Heavy weather was encountered off Hudson Strait, the rudder was carried away, and another was built and hung with the utmost difficulty. As no coal could be obtained at Hebron, some of the interior beams of the vessel were used as fuel, and small quantities of coal were obtained later at several ports on the way south. The explorer has this to say about his men and his ship:

Tidal observations, entirely by Mr. Marvin, and meteorological observations, principally by him, were made during the year.

Valuable soundings were made by Messrs. Marvin and Bartlett. Dr. Wolff has looked after the health of the expedition with unremitting care and skill and there has been no serious illness. The Doctor also did his share of the spring sled work. Mr. Marvin, while on board ship during the winter or hunting in the interior and through the spring sledging campaign, assumed his full share of the work.

Captain Bartlett has proved himself invaluable. He has been unsparing of himself in his efforts for the success of the expedition and the safety of the *Roosevelt*. Henson and Percy, my stewards, tried in years of Arctic experience, have again proved their worth. The officers and men have proved interested and willing. Mate Bartlett was in charge of the *Roosevelt* during the absence of Captain Bartlett and myself. Chief Engineer Wardwell, from the time of the failure of our water-tube boilers, two days from Sydney, had a trying and difficult time and has found full scope for his ingenious resources. Two of the firemen—Clarke, of Massachusetts, and Ryan, of Newfoundland—took an active part in the spring sledge work. Boatswain Murphy was of material assistance in the field.

The *Roosevelt* as a sea boat is equal to one of our typical bank fishermen, handy and dry, for which the fullest credit is due to her builder, Captain Dix. In heavy ice she has been very effective, even with her reduced power, forcing her way through apparently impassable places. Young ice, even of very considerable thickness, she treaded under her with great facility, and under pressures she rose readily and easily. Finally, whatever valuation may be placed upon the work and result of the expedition, these results are entirely due to the generosity of the members of the Peary Arctic Club, and especially to the unflinching interest and efforts of its president, Morris K. Jesup.

Mrs. Peary and her little son went to Sydney to await the arrival of her husband.